

# Cassidy: 'It's fun to be me'

## David Cassidy

Opening for: The Beach Boys.

Where: Deer Creek Music Center.

When: 7:30 p.m. tonight.

Tickets: \$22.50 pavilion, \$19.50 lawn; (317) 239-5151.

By **MARC D. ALLAN**

STAR STAFF WRITER

David Cassidy's decade-and-a-half quest to reclaim his good name and distinguish himself from his TV character, Keith Partridge, continues tonight when he opens for the Beach Boys at Deer Creek Music Center.

With his 17th record — *"I Didn't You Used to Be . . ."* — released last week and *The Partridge Family* gone since 1974, Cassidy, 42, says he's now comfortable with who he is. And was.

"It's great that enough time has evolved that enough people now I'm not that guy," he says in a telephone interview. "I've done so much work in terms of television and talk shows and interviews, radio and print, that I've spoken enough as this guy," meaning himself.

## Part of people's lives

"I feel pretty clear about it. It's fun. It's fun to be me. People have reference to me in terms of their lives. It's fun to have been a big part of a lot of people's lives."

He did that with the TV show and seven Top 40 hits from 1970 to 1973, including *I Think I Love You*, *Doesn't Somebody Want to Be Wanted* and *I'll Meet You Halfway*.

Cassidy actually performed on those records, but the Partridge Family group lip-synced. When the show ended in 1974, he found it difficult to be taken seriously.

"I really enjoyed making those (Partridge Family) records and it was really fun, but it wasn't a reflection of my own musical tastes, necessarily," he says. "I have a lot of fun going out and singing them now; there were some very good records."

## Not a nostalgia act

"But as a writer, I really think I managed to survive and stay in and I'm having success today



FILE PHOTO

**Ex-teen heartthrob David Cassidy happy with his life and career.**

because I continued to write and not to compromise my own integrity. I didn't become a nostalgia act. I continued to work and write."

He took a three-year hiatus and since then has periodically released records outside the United States.

Everywhere he went, people wanted more Partridge Family-like songs. He experienced "a lot of pain, a lot of frustration creatively — not being able to get over and have people see you as who you are in the present but only want to see you because you're indelibly in their memory."

"I've had to do 15 years' worth of work to separate myself from that character. That's a long, long time. Trust me. It's taken a lot of work on my own part to not hate it and be bitter or angry about it and really see it for all the goodness."

## Some benefits remain

Yet as stifling as that was, Cassidy found some bright mo-

ments — like when his guitarist, Ron Komie, cited Keith Partridge as the reason he started playing.

Komie joins Cassidy on the new record, which is softer and more middle-of-the-road than some of the ex-Partridge's other solo work.

Cassidy says he changed styles because "I don't want to make the same record over and over again. I did that in the early '70s and I found that really stifling and creatively uninspiring."

But nearly two decades later, the old Partridge Family songs sound pretty good to the married father of an 18-month-old son. Cassidy says he'll be mixing his new material with his best-known hits when he performs tonight.

"The fact that I had such an impact on a generation of people was great. It's flattering. And now that I have my own identity, I can go out and, having a musical present, I can embrace my past. And I do."